

# SERVICE

## USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · OFFICE OF INFORMATION · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

July 1966

No. 31

### GROCERY SHOPPING



Pick the Plentifuls. To save money on food, check the ads to see what's in good supply. Abundant foods are usually cheaper. For a peek into the future, here's the U. S. Department of Agriculture's List of Plentiful Foods for July: Plums, peaches, watermelons, vegetables and broiler-fryers. In August expect more plums, Bartlett pears, potatoes, turkeys, seasonal vegetables, peanut butter.

Filling Your Freezer. Thinking about stocking your freezer with beef? The simplest and easiest way to do this probably is to buy a quarter or side of beef and have it processed. However, if your family likes certain cuts, a better way to stock up might be to buy your favorites when they're offered "on special" at the retail market. The retail mark-up, according to marketing specialists at the U. S. Department of Agriculture, is seldom higher than the price per pound charged by wholesalers and locker plants for processing carcass beef.

Protein Bargains. About 40 cents of every dollar spent on food goes for protein items. So any money a homemaker can save here goes a long way in cutting the grocery bill. Instead of serving high-priced protein items every day, food economists at the U. S. Department of Agriculture suggest the homemaker slip into her menus a few of the less expensive foods. \*Serve dry beans occasionally. Five cents worth of beans provide one-third of a day's protein for a young man. \*Prepare cheese dishes. Four ounces of American cheese or 3/4 cup cottage cheese will give each person a meal's worth of protein--for 9 to 12 cents. \*Eggs, beef liver and chicken are three other good protein foods. Figure 15 cents for a third of a day's protein from each of these.

You Spend More, But Save More. Did you know that the bigger your family, the more you save on food? Per person, that is. According to food cost experts at the U. S. Department of Agriculture, a family of six spends about \$7.50 per person per week for groceries. Those of only one or two persons pay \$10.20 each for food. Why? The bigger family is able to buy in quantity. It throws away less food. And, of necessity, it watches the food bill more carefully.



How Much for Milk? You can save on your milk bill by buying some fresh, some canned, some dry. A family of four uses about 1,095 quarts of milk per year. How much does this cost? It depends on what kind you buy, and, of course, on the prices in your community. The U. S. Department of Agriculture recently compared the costs of several milk items for a family of four in a typical American town: Fresh, homogenized milk, \$295 a year; with Vitamin D added, \$307; nonfat milk or buttermilk, \$230; nonfat dry milk, anywhere from \$110 to \$88; evaporated milk, national brand, \$175; store brand, \$153.

On a Plastic Platter. Fresh pole beans that are prepackaged--either in pulp or plastic trays, or in plastic bags--make the trip to distant markets in excellent condition, USDA researchers find. The beans look better. They sell better. And they stay fresh longer than non-packaged beans.

#### HOUSE AND YARD

Painting Pointers. Summertime is paint up time. And if you plan to paint your house this summer--or hire it done--you'll probably be interested in these tips from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. (1) Use the same brand and type of paint originally used--unless, of course, it's given poor service. (2) Repaint only when the old paint has worn thin and no longer protects the wood. (3) Ordinarily, paint no oftener than every 4 years. (4) When applying two coats, wait 2 weeks between the first and second. (5) To avoid heat blisters, paint the north side of the building during the first part of the morning, the east side in late morning, the south side early in the afternoon, and the west side in late afternoon.

Ready, Aim, Spray. It's hard to spot a chigger. They're so small. But after you've been bitten a few times, you find this a necessity. To locate a chigger-infested area--so you can give them the spray treatment--follow this suggestion from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Place a small piece of black construction paper edgewise on the ground, or lean it against a tuft of grass or fallen branch where you suspect there might be chiggers. Watch it for a few minutes. If you see small orange or pinkish mites moving rapidly across the paper, you've found them!

Lawn Tips. Don't remove the clippings from your lawn (unless, of course, you've recently fertilized and the grass is growing rapidly). Clippings, U. S. Department of Agriculture turf experts say, help to maintain humidity long after the sun has dried off surrounding uncovered areas.

When you water, do it early enough in the day to allow the grass time to dry out before night. Avoid frequent, light waterings--especially during warm weather.

Never remove more than one-half of the leaf surface at one mowing.

A Spread for Your Beds. U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists have developed a spread for flower beds--and vegetable gardens--that will keep the weeds away all summer long. It's a loosely woven cloth treated with herbicides. Fourteen different chemicals can be applied by the manufacturer in just the right amount to protect your garden from unwanted weeds. You simply lay the cloth between the rows and around the plants. Although not yet on the market, this herbicide-treated cheese-cloth offers great promise for the future. It is not only convenient but safe to use.

Rosier Future for Roses. To make cut roses last longer, follow these directions from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Cut stems on a slant and remove lower foliage. Loosely wrap flowers--everything but the cut ends--in wax paper. Put in a clean vase containing a mixture of bath-warm water and a preservative (you can buy it at your florist's). Let stand 4 to 6 hours in a cool place. Remove the wrapping and arrange the flowers--still in the same vase and preservative mixture.



Fortified Wheat. "Enriching grain with a protein coating is the best way to get protein to hungry nations," says Dr. Aaron M. Altschul, special advisor to the Secretary of Agriculture. Dr. Altschul is interested in sending wheat to hungry people abroad. He points out that while wheat already contains more protein than some other grains and vegetables, it can be made even more nutritious if it is fortified with amino acid lysine. This would be relatively inexpensive to do, and it would pay big dividends in the health of the people eating this wheat, Dr. Altschul says.

Pleasing the Palate. You can give a man food, but you can't make him eat it--even though he may be starving. Such is the case in many under-developed countries. Native customs and preferences often are as much a cause of poor nutrition as lack of food. For this reason, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has developed WURLD wheat, a peeled wheat that looks much like rice. In rice-eating countries, where rice is often in short supply, this wheat could serve as a substitute. It's a good source of the protein so needed in the diets of these people.

#### IN THE KITCHEN

Head Space. Here's a tip to remember when freezing fruits and vegetables. Be sure to allow for head space--room for the product to expand. U. S. Department of Agriculture food specialists suggest: 1/2 inch space for a dry pack (fruits and vegetables packed without liquid added--except such things as broccoli and asparagus which pack loose). For a liquid pack in wide-mouth containers, leave 1/2 inch per pint; with containers having narrow top openings, 3/4 inch per pint. The exception: Juice. Each pint of juice requires 1-1/2 inches of head space.

Cheese in Family Meals. Here's a booklet that tells all about cheese--how to select a cheese that will suit your palate, how to store it, serve it, cook it. There are 11 pages of cheese recipes, ranging from appetizers to desserts, with recipes for main dishes, salads and breads between. Each recipe lists the number of calories per serving--and when it's made with cheese, this is usually good news for dieters. "Cheese in Family Meals," HG-112, sells for 15 cents. Order from Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. Please include your zipcode.

#### INSPECTION

Woman's Work. More than 150 homemakers--who weekly inspect fruits and vegetables at the supermarkets in which they shop--now get paid for doing the same type of thing in packing plants and canneries across the country. They have become official fruit and vegetable inspectors, employees of the U. S. Department of Agriculture or the States in which they work. Today, 153 women inspect everything from peanuts in the southern States to potatoes in Idaho, tomatoes in Indiana. Hired for a job that was previously for men only, the women appear to be here to stay. USDA officials find them capable and conscientious. More women will be hired this summer and fall, according to USDA. Still more next year.

#### DO IT YOURSELF PROJECT

Build Your Own Boat Landing. If you own waterfront property and enjoy cruising and fishing, you'll be interested in this plan for a small craft landing. It won't work on a river or lake where masses of ice move out in the spring, but it can withstand waves of 3 feet and a tide of 2 to 3 feet. And there's no better time than the summer months to do the building. Any handy man-around-the house can do it--even to sinking the pilings. (You "jet" the holes with the pressure from your water system.) For working drawings of this boat landing--plan No.5975--write to the Extension agricultural engineer at your state land-grant university. Or, contact your county agent. He can help you get it--probably for less than a dollar.

## VACATION TIPS

Too Heavy to Handle. When it takes two to lift a spare tire, there's something funny in Denmark. But in this case it was Mexico. And the tire was being smuggled into the United States--with 40 pounds of prohibited meat inside. It was intercepted by alert USDA quarantine officials who were conducting a routine border check. Visitors to Mexico, the U. S. Department of Agriculture warns, may not bring back fresh meat. It may contain diseases that could spread to U. S. livestock.

Follow That Sign. Should you be visiting a National Forest and see a sign that indicates a nature trail--follow it. It will open a wide new door to all the many things that are in the forests, things that perhaps you didn't notice before or didn't recognize. You can pick up a trail map at the entrance. It will point out the various bushes, trees and flowers, and tell you a bit about them and the area in which they live. You may find a deer trail, a tree that has been struck by lightning, a growth of fungus. Whatever it is, it will offer an unusual educational experience for you and your youngsters to enjoy. The trails are usually short and easily traversed--suitable for young and old alike.

Slow-Moving Vehicles. When you hit the highway this summer, beware of slow-moving vehicles. This is the time of year farmers and road crews are busiest, and often they must move their equipment on high-speed roadways. To give you fair warning, several states now require slow-moving vehicles to bear an easy-to-see emblem. But whenever, wherever you travel, watch for this symbol of slowness--on mowers, graders, road rollers, combines, tractors and similar slow-moving farm and construction equipment. It may save your life.

## COMMUNITY AIDS

Where to Get Help. Good water and sewage systems, libraries, schools and health services--these are some of the things lacking in rural areas. If you and others in your community would like to do something about bringing these modern-living facilities to your areas, it can be done. There are many Federal programs that can help communities build water and sewer systems, improve schools, expand health services, construct library and community centers, and develop outdoor recreation facilities. For a check list of what's available and where to write for more information, contact the Special Reports Division, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250. Ask for: "Federal Programs for Individual and Community Advancement."

## WATER SAFETY

Rescue Station. Each year over 3,300 persons drown within 15 feet of a bank, dock, boat or other support. Many of these could perhaps be saved--even by non-swimmers--were the necessary equipment handy. Anyone who owns a waterfront lot, a farm with a pond or a home pool should install a rescue station. All that is required is to erect an 8-foot post on the bank; hang on it a life preserver attached to 50 feet of rope, and a rescue pole 12 to 14 feet long.

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SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write: Jeanne S. Park, Editor, SERVICE, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.